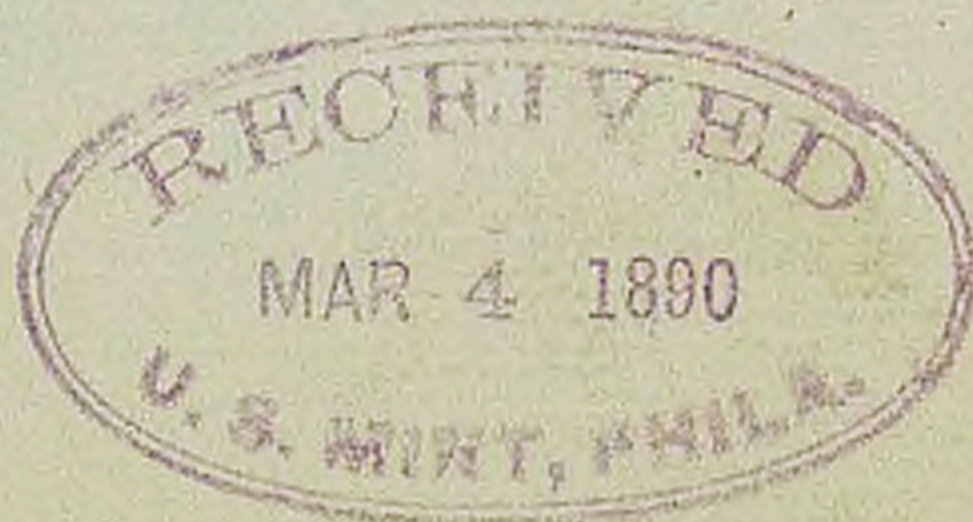


1004

Boston, Mass.
Feb. 11, 1890

Horace N. Fisher

Asks the origin of
1¢ + 3¢ pieces of 1837.



60 Congress St., Boston,
February 11, 1890.
To the Director of the Mint,
Philadelphia, Pa.

Dear Sir:

I beg to submit for consideration the accompanying wax impressions of a "Composition" cent, dated 1837. The obverse side represents an American Eagle killing a Rattlesnake, possibly this may refer to the U.S. Government suppressing Nullification in South Carolina. The reverse side bears the customary wreath encircling the words "One Cent", preserving the style of lettering; but instead of the usual legend "United States of America", it bears the name of the composition—much as the base-metal German Pfennigs of that time were stamped, made of a composition apparently similar. I understand that this is the only American Token piece, if it be a Token, which specifies a value without reservation.

The well-known American Numismaticist, Mr. Crosby of Boston, informs me that 1-cent + 3-cent pieces were struck in 1837 of this metal; but he does not know where they were struck, nor whether they were token-pieces or experimental coins. Can you inform me anything of their origin or purpose?

In any event the die seems to have been boldly + skillfully cut, with milled edge. The metal seems a kind of German Silver rather than nickel.

Respectfully Yours

Horace N. Fisher

[NARA RG104, Entry 1, Box 162]

[Abstract:] Asks the origin of 14 & 3 [cent] price of 1837.

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February 11, 1890

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Philadelphia, Pa.
Dear Sir:

I beg to submit for consideration the accompanying wax impressions of a “Composition” cent, dated 1837. The obverse side represents an American Eagle killing a Rattlesnake; possibly this may refer to the U.S. Government suppressing Nullification in South Carolina. The reverse side bears the customary wreath encircling the words “one cent”, reserving the style of lettering; but instead of the usual legend “United States of America”, it bears the name of the composition – much as the base-metal German pfennigs of that time were stamped, made of a composition apparently similar. I understand that this is the only American Token-piece, if it be a Token, which specifies a value without reservation.

The well-known American Numismatist, Mr. Crosby of Boston, informs me that 1-cent & 3-cent pieces were struck in 1837 of this metal, but he does not know where they were struck, nor whether they were token-pieces or experimental coins. Can you inform me anything of their origin or purpose?

In any event the die seems to have been boldly & skillfully cut, with milled edge. The metal seems a kind of German Silver rather than nickel.

Respectfully yours,
Horace N. Fisher